

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY  
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, August 19, 2014 at 5:00 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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**PRESENT:** Chair Erickson, Rosemary Desisles, Carl Soderberg, Jim Haskins, Duane Pierce, Joe Witkowski, Ed Koslowski, Jerry Polus, Tracy Rosinski, Lynn Geiser

**EXCUSED:** Sherry Steenbock, Delores Pierce

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**\*\*Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1621**

**1. Call Meeting to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 5:00 p.m.

**2. Invocation.**

**3. Approve/Modify Agenda.**

Chair Bernie Erickson modified the agenda to take Item 13 following Item 3.

**Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve the agenda as modified. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

*Although shown in the proper format here, Item 13 was taken at this time.*

**4. Approve or Modify Minutes of July 15, 2014.**

**Motion made by Ed Koslowski, seconded by Rosemary Desisles to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**5. Budget Status Financial Report through June 30, 2014.**

Erickson noted that this budget status financial report shows the revenue received and deposited from the concert held earlier in the year. The report for next month will show the deposit of the check received from Heartland Hospice for the band at Veterans Appreciation Day at the Fair.

**Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Tracy Rosinski to receive and place on file. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**6. Discussion/review regarding Veterans Appreciation Day at the Brown County Fair in preparation for 2015.**

CVSO Jerry Polus congratulated the Subcommittee for all of their work and dedication to this event and indicated that everyone involved did an outstanding job and this was the best event they have ever had. He continued that the program flowed very well and the feedback he received was excellent.

Ed Koslowski stated that Louise Dahlke of the Fair Board should also be recognized for all of her efforts and indicated that she worked with him continuously with regard to placement of posters, etc. Duane Pierce noted that the reason Dahlke became so involved in this event is because her husband is a vet and she had seen all the problems there were in previous years with Appreciation Day and she wanted to help alleviate these problems. Pierce also noted that Randy from the Fair stayed off the microphone during the ceremony which was

greatly appreciated. Pierce felt that the Fair was phenomenal to work with this year all the way around. Rosemary Desisles volunteered to write a thank you note to Dahlke for all of her help and work and she will give this to Koslowski to be presented to Dahlke at the next Fair Board meeting.

Jim Haskins was happy to see the Appreciation Day event listed in the Fair brochure. He also thanked Erickson, who received a round of applause, for stepping up in the absence of John Maino. It was also indicated that Laura Nehlsen did a fantastic job singing the National Anthem.

Polus indicated that Laura Smith from Fox 11 did a very nice segment on the news and he was pleased with the coverage given to the event this year. Haskins also indicated that he had done an interview for the news and Erickson noted that Jeff Alexander of Channel 2 did a very good interview that aired on Thursday night before the event.

Desisles suggested that it would be nice to have a tent covering the stage area in the future so that if there is a problem with the weather, there would not be issues with moving the band and the microphone. This was discussed briefly and more consideration will be given to this idea in time for next year's event.

Joe Witkowski felt that since this group is a Subcommittee of the County Board, it would be important for the County Board to know that the event was held and what a success it was. Erickson noted that he will report on this during supervisor comments at the next County Board meeting.

Erickson also noted that he had numerous conversations with individuals at the event and has come up with some suggestions and comments based on these conversations. His first comment was with regard to the schedule for the ceremony. He noted that many people left after the door prize drawing was done and did not stay for the band. He did not feel it was cost-effective to pay for a band if no one stuck around to hear them. He suggested that perhaps in the future the band play in the afternoon and then the ceremony be held following the band performance. This will be discussed in greater detail in the coming months when plans are made for next year's event.

Erickson also commented on the Rolling Thunder Table Ceremony. He felt the ceremony was excellent this year and noted that it seemed shorter than in the past. Pierce indicated that the reason the ceremony was shorter was because the flag folding portion of the ceremony was not done. He also noted that it was helpful to have Rolling Thunder perform the ceremony up on the stage instead of at ground level. Erickson felt that people enjoyed the shorter ceremony, especially since the highest percentage of people in attendance were standing and probably liked to see things kept short and moving along.

Polus reported that he had recently had a conversation with John Maino. Maino was sorry that he could not attend the event. Maino advised Polus that he would like to collect information from Korean Vets as he is currently working on a book about Korean Vets. Anyone who could provide names to Maino is asked to contact him directly.

Erickson noted that he had County Board staff google US Wars earlier in the day to figure out what would be the next war anniversary to commemorate. Erickson continued that he had talked with Maino and came up with the idea of honoring women who served in the military next year. A certificate similar to what had been done for this year's event could be created and distributed at next year's event. The Subcommittee was pleased with this idea and would like to pursue it for next year. Tracy Rosinski stated that the Roselles honored women military members at their event one year and it was highly successful.

A discussion was also held with regard to honoring WWII veterans in nursing homes and assisted living facilities with certificates on Veterans Day. Erickson will ask the County Board staff to draft a certificate to this effect to have available for review at the next meeting. Rosinski stated that she has daily contact with a number of nursing homes and would be

able to come up with a list of WWII Vets very easily. She will put together a list and provide the same to Erickson.

Polus asked Carl Soderberg for his feedback regarding the Fair event. Soderberg noted that he came right before the ceremony and enjoyed it, especially the crisper, shorter Table Ceremony.

Polus asked for feedback with regard to the length of time the tent is open and, more specifically, if it was felt that the length of time was too long. Koslowski responded that being open from 12:00 – 6:00 is a long day and Polus agreed. A discussion was held as to shortening the timeframe up a little bit and this will be discussed in more detail in preparation for next year's event. Polus thought that a solution may be to have the tent open for three hours, followed by the band performance and then the program. Erickson felt that people would tend to stick around for the program if the door prize drawing was held following the program. Rosinski noted that the afternoon is long, however she indicated at this year's event most of the participants in the tent were all packed up by the time people started showing up for the ceremony. She felt that in the future all tables should remain up until the time of the ceremony. Koslowski noted that the take down was moved up a little bit this year due to the threat of bad weather. He also noted that the banners currently list the hours to be 12:00 - 6:00 and if the times are changed, the banners would be obsolete. There was also a brief discussion that the Fair Board may wish to have the event held on Sunday in the future, but the Subcommittee did not like this idea and felt it should stay on Saturday as it has in the past.

**7. Report from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Desisles, Haskins, Koslowski, Maino, Ness, Pierce, Steenbock & Witkowski).**

-Bernie Erickson did not have anything to add to what was already discussed.

-Rosemary Desisles indicated that it is still the intent of the Navy League to hold an Honor Run in the fall if they can get a raffle license and get tickets and posters printed in time. She noted that there is a local company who has committed to donating the printing costs. A date for the event was discussed and the Subcommittee felt that it should not be held on Veterans Day as there are too many other competing events on that day. Desisles will keep this Subcommittee advised of developments with regard to the run.

-Jim Haskins reported on a number of things. He noted that he has learned that each month Ryan Funeral Home in De Pere flies a flag in honor of a specific veteran. He also reported that he had recently read an article in the newspaper that described proper flag etiquette as well as saluting while not in uniform and he felt this was important information. Haskins continued by reporting that actor Lou Diamond Phillips has been named the new spokesman for the VFW nationwide. Haskins also reported that there was a Military Veterans Salute at the Wisconsin State Fair on Sunday, August 10 which included free admission to the Fair for Veterans and their family members.

Haskins concluded his report by stating that he had attended the memorial service for Staff Sergeant David Kittredge recently. Kittredge was killed in action on April 16, 1945 but was not returned home until August 11, 2014. Haskins noted that John Maino spoke at the ceremony and it was very moving.

-Ed Koslowski noted that Veterans Day is approaching and asked if there would be a list available for the businesses that each Subcommittee member was to contact to inquire about discounts and special offers for Veterans. Erickson responded that Sherry Steenbock typically handles this and he will check with her.

-Duane Pierce reported that the semi-annual booyah sale at the Legion Post on Irwin Avenue will be held on September 13. He noted that booyah sells out fast and urged those interested to arrive early. Pierce also noted that during the summer months Heritage Hill holds a free concert once a month and stated that in August the concert was by the bluegrass group, Bent Grass. During the concert, the band mentioned that they will be

performing a free show at the Meyer Theater on November 12. Admission is by donation with the proceeds going to Old Glory Honor Flights.

-Joe Witkowski stated that he had read an article in the "Glimpses of the Past" section of the newspaper that on August 25, 1939, all businesses in Brown County closed down to allow their employees to attend the County Fair.

**8. Acceptance of check for \$300 from Heartland Hospice.**

Tracy Rosinski and Heartland Hospice received a round of applause and great thanks for donating the funds to the Subcommittee which were used to pay the band at the event at the Fair.

**9. Election of Vice Chair of Subcommittee.**

Jim Haskins nominated himself to serve as Vice Chair.

Joe Witkowski nominated Ed Koslowski to serve as Vice Chair.

**Motion made by Joe Witkowski, seconded by Jim Haskins to close nominations and cast vote. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

A written vote was taken with Ed Koslowski receiving the majority of the votes, and therefore being named as Vice Chair of the Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee.

**10. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.**

Polus introduced Lynn Geiser to the Subcommittee. Geiser talked about the Wisconsin Warrior Summit that will be held on October 7, 2014 at the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center in Green Bay. She noted the Summit is dedicated to coordinating a comprehensive community response to the needs of Veterans and their families. Approximately 20 – 25 different organizations will be involved in this event and there will be a number of breakout sessions dealing with a number of issues facing Veterans and their families. More information can be obtained at [www.wiwarriorsummit.com](http://www.wiwarriorsummit.com).

Desisles asked if transportation would be available for Veterans who are unable to drive themselves. Geiser thought this was a great idea and she will check into it.

Polus reported that a ground breaking ceremony will be held on August 25 for the Veterans Manor which is a project of Cardinal Capital Management and the Center for Veterans Issues. The project will consist of 52 apartments for veterans and the target opening date is Memorial Day, 2015. Polus would like to get the word out on the ground breaking as he would like to see many Veterans attend.

Polus continued that he is currently working on the Purple Heart Pass program which was started in Milwaukee County in 2013 as a way to recognize Purple Heart recipients by granting free passes to some of Milwaukee County's attractions. Brown County will be doing this in conjunction with Milwaukee County and will expand the program to attractions in Brown County. Polus is hoping to make a formal announcement on this within the next six weeks. Some of the venues in Brown County will include the Botanical Gardens, Hall of Fame and Museum along with others.

**11. Comments from Carl Soderburg.**

Carl Soderburg did not have anything to report.

**12. Comments from Tracy Rosinski.**

Rosinski indicated that Heartland will be sponsoring an evening with Deborah Grassman on September 23, 2014 from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn. Grassman is the author

of *Peace at Last: Stories of Hope and Healing for Veterans and Their Families* which is used by multiple agencies to learn about the effects of past trauma on the quality of a person's dying process, the influence of the various cultures of war on dying veterans and warrior wisdom. She has also written a new book, *The Hero Within: Redeeming the Destiny We We're Born to Fulfill*. Her presentation will focus on soul injury, an overlooked, unassessed consequence of war. The presentation will provide insight about soul injury and, more importantly, meaningful ways to respond. This program is open to Veterans, family members of Veterans and civilians.

13. **Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law.**

Erickson noted that Tracy Rosinski has asked to become an official member of this Subcommittee. Erickson indicated that he felt this was a good idea and everyone in attendance agreed.

**Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Jim Haskins to accept Tracy Rosinski as an official member of the Veterans Recognition Subcommittee. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Erickson also noted that he has tried to contact Subcommittee member Troy Ness several times but Ness has not returned calls. At this time Erickson felt it would be appropriate to stop sending Ness mailings for this group and if Ness wanted to come back in the future, he would be welcome.

14. **Adjourn.**

**Motion made by Jim Haskins, seconded by Duane Pierce to adjourn at 6:12 p.m. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio  
Recording Secretary